

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method of manufacturing a micromechanical component, the method comprising:
 - providing a substrate having a front side and a back side;
 - patterning the front side of the substrate;
 - at least partially covering the patterned front side of the substrate with a protective layer containing germanium;
 - patterning the back side of the substrate; and
 - at least partially removing the protective layer containing germanium from the patterned front side of the substrate.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the substrate has a wafer substrate, a first sacrificial layer situated on the wafer substrate and a micromechanical function layer situated on the first sacrificial layer, the micromechanical function layer forming the front side and the wafer substrate forming the back side.
3. The method according to claim 1, further comprising forming a hard-surface mask on the front side of the substrate, the protective layer being formed selectively in openings in the hard-surface mask.
4. The method according to claim 3, further comprising applying the protective layer to an entire portion of the back side of the substrate.
5. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - forming a first hard-surface mask on the front side of the substrate; and
 - forming the protective layer over an entire surface of the first hard-surface mask.
6. The method according to claim 5, further comprising forming the protective layer over a nucleation layer over the entire surface.

7. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
forming a second hard-surface mask on the back side of the substrate;
and
etching a cavern into the back side when the front side is covered at
least partially by the protective layer.
8. The method according to claim 7, further comprising:
after etching the cavern, removing the protective layer from the front
side; and
subsequently etching trenches in a micromechanical function layer via
a first hard-surface mask.
9. The method according to claim 7, further comprising forming the second hard-
surface mask from the protective layer on the back side.